Do You Fear COVID-19?

Conquer the coronavirus by relinquishing control.

November 9, 2020 By Kate Ferguson

Stress, uncertainty and fear are unavoidable in life. There will be many situations over which we have no power. But the flip side of this reality is that we can manage these feelings of uneasiness. Mastery over how we choose to respond to anything that happens in our lives gives us the ability to successfully negotiate difficulties that arise without warning or reason.

Many experts suggest that simple acceptance is the best way to cope with the stress and anxiety brought on by the COVID-19 crisis . Beyond commonsense guidelines to observe social distancing and wear a mask when and where required, there is not much we can do to ward off this infectious disease. Until a safe and effective vaccine is developed, the coronavirus now shares our world. Accept that fact, and continue to live your life.

Of course, it’s hard not to obsess about the outbreaks and mounting death rates caused by the virus. But watching and listening to the news nonstop or numbing our anxiety with unhealthy distractions is not the answer.

When life is hard, people tend to adapt. Often, in the face of adversity, we surprise ourselves with our ability to rebound from unsettling setbacks and crushing defeat. The good news is that it’s possible to strengthen this quality.

A piece of advice that has withstood time is that in times of crisis, it’s important to take things one day at a time. When we face the unknown, anxiety can lead to paralysis. Sometimes, just savoring each moment of our lives allows us to appreciate what we have without needing to know what will happen next. Cherish those times because they help us to survive and thrive.

Another suggestion? Face the source of our stress and fear. A group of researchers expanded on this idea to develop control-focused behavioral treatment—a method of coping with posttraumatic stress disorder. The core concept of the technique is that it’s impossible to control every single risk that threatens our existence and simultaneously lead a satisfying and productive life.

According to these scientists, to attempt to do so is incompatible with survival. Now, simply apply this concept to how you view the pandemic.

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